

Testimony by Mindy Landau, Brady United Against Gun Violence, Maryland State
Executive Committee
Support for Ghost Gun Legislation H.B 425
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My name is Mindy Landau and I am the co-state lead for the Brady Maryland State Executive Committee. I'm also co-lead and founder of the Montgomery County Chapter of Brady United Against Gun Violence. I'm a long time resident of Montgomery County, MD, and a 40-year, retired federal civil servant.

As you no doubt already know, ghost guns look, feel, and function like a traditional gun – and are just as deadly and dangerous.

Ghost guns undermine almost all gun laws. The parts and kits used to build ghost guns are untraceable and unregulated, and are available to purchase online or at gun shows without any background check. These parts and kits can be bought by people who should not own guns - domestic abusers, gun traffickers, and even underage children! In fact, they are **intentionally marketed** as unregulated and untraceable to appeal to people who want to avoid background checks. This means anyone who has already been deemed unfit to possess a firearm could easily manufacture one, putting our communities at risk.

Gun violence is clearly an epidemic in our country and in our state. Just a couple of weeks ago, a junior at Magruder High School near my home, in Montgomery County, used a ghost gun to shoot and seriously injure another student 15-year old. In August, a 14-year old in Germantown armed with a ghost gun opened fire at an outdoor basketball court, killing one man and wounding three teenagers. In Montgomery County alone, the proliferation of ghost guns has increased fivefold over the last few years. These numbers will only continue to rise as these guns become more well-known and accessible. They are already in our own backyard, and their continued easy availability is detrimental to all communities across our state – from my home in the suburbs, to Baltimore, to the most rural reaches of Maryland.

The bottom line is with rights come responsibilities – hobbyists can continue to purchase serialized components, but we all know the importance of ensuring that firearms used in crimes can be traced. Many other states such as New York, New Jersey, Connecticut, California, Nevada, and Washington D.C. have all taken action to regulate or ban ghost guns, and several other states are considering similar legislation. Gun violence is a complex epidemic requiring a wide variety of solutions and this legislation is one critical piece of that solution. This effort will help to keep our kids, and

our schools, safe. It is past time for Maryland to do the right thing and ban untraceable, unregulated guns! Brady United strongly supports H.B. 425.